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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

April 22, 1971

Dr. Hugh T. Cunningham
Director of Training
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C. 20505

Dear Dr. Cunningham:

The attached memorandum report from the Deputy Under Secretary to the Under Secretary summarizes what appears to be the consensus of the Working Group from its two meetings and the findings of Mr. Howard Haugerud's Subcommittee on Curriculum.

I propose that we meet on Wednesday, April 28, to discuss this draft. The meeting will be held at the Foreign Service Institute, 1400 Key Boulevard, Rosslyn, Virginia, at 10:00 a.m., in the Conference Room of the Director's Office (Room #1200). Please confirm your attendance with Miss Arena, telephone 557-5510. If you need parking, she will explain the arrangements.

Sincerely,

Howard E. Sollenberger
Acting Director
Foreign Service Institute

Enclosure

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MEMORANDUM

April 22, 1971

TO: Under Secretary John N. Irwin

FROM: William B. Macomber, Jr., Deputy Under Secretary

SUBJECT: Review and Recommendations on the National Interdepartmental Seminar (NIS)

The Special Working Group which you asked me to organize has completed its review of the National Interdepartmental Seminar. The group considered ^{the following} ~~four~~ options, and has reached the following conclusions:

OPTIONS

1. That the NIS be abolished on an assumption that it has served its purpose and is no longer relevant to the needs of the decade ahead.
2. That the NIS be continued in its present form and with its present stated objectives.
3. That the NIS be abolished and that an entirely new set of objectives be established.
4. That the NIS be converted to a Seminar for foreign affairs executive-level personnel building on the present NIS but more broadly focused on the dynamic process of policy coordination and implementation within a context of domestic realities as well as current foreign policy issues and national security objectives.

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Summary Conclusions and Discussions

1. The NIS was found to be serving a continuing useful purpose.

Each participating agency representative canvassed his own area of responsibility and ^{by such means as} in the process interviewed recent graduates of the NIS ^{and} participants who were currently attending the 54th session, and solicited ⁱⁿ views of user Departments and offices.

While several members indicated problems of funding and in making senior personnel available during a period of stringent budgets and heavy work pressures, all of the participating members found that their respective agencies supported the concept of a short interagency training program for senior officers assigned to missions overseas.

It was noted that the NIS is the only existing vehicle that brings together any significant number of senior officers from the foreign affairs agencies (STATE, DOD, AID, USIA and CIA) who are assigned to program direction positions at our overseas missions. If it were eliminated, a new vehicle would probably sooner or later have to be created for the purpose of dealing with increasingly complex issues and the processes of policy implementation and coordination.

2. The past focus of the NIS on "internal security" and "problems of developing countries," ^{and} while still relevant, was considered too narrow for the decade of the 70's. Any continuing program should

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be broadened to focus on the process of policy implementation and coordination within a context of domestic realities as well as current foreign policy issues and national security objectives.

It should also be operated under a charter broad enough to undertake short conferences on a variety of subjects and problems of current concern. As an example, the group cited the Interagency Population Conference now conducted by the NIS four times a year [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED] It also urged that more attention be paid to the policy-making process within the DOD patterned on the format now used to examine State and National Security processes.

While the NIS has moved during the past several years to broaden its focus, it still suffers from a lingering image as the "Counterinsurgency Course." To overcome this image, it should not only be given a broader mandate by the Under Secretaries Committee and the NSC, it should also be renamed to signify this change.

Because the NIS already provides an existing framework and many of the program elements considered useful, it was the consensus of the Working Group that while some changes are desirable, an entirely new program was not necessary. Several agency representatives expressed concern that budgetary problems might arise if the NIS were to close and a new organization be attempted during a period of stringent economy measures. The Working Group concluded that it was more prudent to modify the NIS than to abolish it and start over

with something entirely new.

3. Participation should be broadened to include executive-level program direction personnel assigned to any part of the world. It should also be opened selectively to executive-level personnel involved in foreign affairs from domestic federal agencies.

Required participation in the NIS has in the past been limited to senior personnel of the primary foreign affairs agencies assigned to developing countries.

It was the consensus of the Working Group that with an increased focus on the process of policy implementation and coordination, the distinction, for training purposes, between persons assigned to developing versus developed countries is not significant and should be eliminated. Also, with the increasing involvement of domestic agencies in international problems and programs, it was felt senior personnel of these agencies who have a direct interest in international problems and programs should, on a selective basis, be invited to participate.

4. To be viable in terms of full active participation the new program should not exceed 3 weeks in length.

The Working Group observed that the present NIS has progressively been reduced from 5 to 3 weeks because of the difficulty participating agencies were experiencing in releasing senior personnel for such a course. It concludes that a longer program would not be feasible.

5. The Seminar should continue to be conducted by the Department of State under the auspices of the Foreign Service Institute.

The Foreign Service Institute has within the past year acquired new and more adequate facilities for the Seminar. It also has substantial experience in conducting interagency training programs. The group sees no reason to change the present physical or administrative arrangements.

6. The Seminar should continue to be operated on a shared funding basis by STATE, DOD, AID, USIA and CIA. Participation of personnel from other agencies should be on a tuition basis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Under Secretaries Committee issue a directive to the Foreign Service Institute to:

- a) Redesignate the NIS on Problems of Development and Internal Defense as the ~~National Interdepartmental~~ Foreign Affairs Executive Seminar effective July 1, 1971.

- b) Broaden the focus of the Seminar and give more stress to the process of policy implementation and coordination, within a context of domestic realities as well as current foreign policy issues and National Security objectives. In carrying out this objective the Seminar should continue to give balanced attention to problems of "development" and "internal defense" and also, to

the policy-making process as it affects national security.

c) Plan the Seminar for a period not to exceed 3 weeks in length and to offer it at frequent enough intervals throughout the year to meet the demands of senior personnel assigned overseas.

d) Open the Seminar on a selective basis to senior personnel from the domestic agencies who have international program responsibilities.

e) Provide, in addition to the regular Seminar, short interagency conferences on timely issues and problems for senior officers.

f) Establish a system of staff rotation so that the Seminar will have a continuing influx of fresh experience.

g) Establish an advisory group to the Seminar composed of representatives of the primary supporting agencies and at up to three public members to be chaired by the Director of the Foreign Service Institute. The "Advisory Group" shall report annually at the end of the fiscal year to the Under Secretaries Committee on compliance with this directive and the directive to participating agencies on participation and support.

2. That the Under Secretaries Committee issue a memorandum to the participating agencies (STATE, DOD, CIA, AID and USIA)

advising them of the redesignation of the "NIS on Problems of Development and Internal Defense" as the National Interdepartmental Foreign Affairs Executive Seminar, and of its broader mandate as stated in 1.b above, and directing these agencies to:

a) Assign senior executive-level or program direction personnel who are assigned to U. S. Missions overseas to the Seminar in anticipation of such assignments regardless of whether the onward assignment is to a developing or developed country.

b) Provide financial and staff support to the Seminar on a shared basis.

c) Designate a member to the Seminar Advisory Group.

3. The Under Secretaries Committee seek confirmation of these directives from the National Security Council.

Enclosures:

Syllabus
Draft Directive
Special Working Group membership

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12 April 1971

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training

SUBJECT : The National Interdepartmental Seminar

1. A total of 29 C.I.A. officers have attended the last four sessions of the National Interdepartmental Seminar (14 Sept. 1970 - 19 March 1971). Of that number, 19 officers have submitted critiques on the course. These critiques are attached.

2. Without exception, these 19 officers have found the NIS to be a useful and valuable educational experience. In general, they comment on the NIS as a broadening experience, on the in-depth exposure to national policy and policy problems in both the foreign and domestic fields, on a better understanding of some of the attributes as well as shortcomings of U.S. governmental programs overseas, and on the need for greater cooperation among the foreign affairs agencies of the Government. Also, they comment on the NIS as an effective forum of presenting the C.I.A. and its work.

3. As can be seen from the attached schedule of the 54th Session, the general direction of the NIS has remained largely unchanged - highlighting the development process, U.S. foreign policy and decision-making, and current domestic forces and factors affecting foreign policy decisions, and perspectives on U.S. policy, problems, and strategies. Emphasis has continued to be placed on maintaining a high quality of performance in the general lectures and in the regional seminar discussion groups.

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